

From this day, until the Treaty of Constantinople officially recognized Greek independence, the Greek people waged a valiant and victorious struggle for their freedom.

The Ottoman Empire's oppression and occupation of Greece evolved over the course of the 14th and 15th centuries. Yet during these centuries, Greek patriots arose to oppose and overthrow the Ottomans' dominion, and in 1814 emerged the secretly formed Friendly Society, which proved a herald of Hellenic liberty.

Then 7 years later, on March 25, 1821, the Orthodox Metropolitan Germanos of Patras proclaimed a national uprising, and simultaneous uprisings arose throughout Greece. Initially this courageous movement liberated many areas of Greece, but the Ottoman Empire rapidly and ruthlessly responded with innumerable acts of brutality, including the massacre of entire Greek communities.

Such Ottoman barbarism contrasted ill with Greek heroism and inspired many nations and citizens to rally to the Greek cause. Thus, in 1827, the British and French fleets delivered a crushing blow to the Ottoman fleet at Navarino, and in 1828, 10,000 French soldiers landed in the Peloponnese to end the Ottoman scourge of Greece.

It was then, and after the horror of war had ebbed and ended, the Convention of May 11, 1832, recognized Greece as a sovereign state, and, again, the Treaty of Constantinople recognized Greek independence from Ottoman rule in July of 1832.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, it is both fitting and fair for we Americans as a free people to commemorate and celebrate the date of May 25, the date Greece, the Cradle of Democracy, was once again made free.

So, too, Mr. Speaker, let us reflect upon the reality that no treaty, no mere scrap of paper, could ever accomplish more than to simply state the obviousness of Greek freedom, which has always endured for time immemorial, despite whatever oppression encountered.

Indeed, did not the pen of the British poet and doomed martyr to the cause of Greek independence and freedom, Lord Byron, write a testament to the Greek people's inherent love of liberty when he wrote:

The Sword, the Banner, and the Field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was never more free.

And may Greece, Mr. Speaker, ever be free.

□ 1930

SMART SECURITY AND THE NONMILITARY APPROACH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under a previous

order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, Pope John Paul II has passed away. I talk about him tonight because we can learn a lesson from the way he lived his life. I did not agree with a lot of what the Pope believed in, but I agree with the way he fought against that which he believed was worth fighting.

When Pope John Paul II came into office, the Soviet Union was a dominant world power and communism was a dominant ideology. John Paul II, who grew up in Poland, knew firsthand the atrocities that were often committed in the name of communism. He fought against the evils of communism by speaking out and putting international pressures on countries like the Soviet Union, Hungary, and Poland. These countries understood the threat that they faced in this Pope, one strong-willed man, who knew firsthand the perils of the communist system. In 1989, the Soviet Union fell, partially as a result of the Pope's actions.

Then, as now, the world faced a major conflict of ideologies. Instead of communism, the major threat to our generation is Islamic extremism perpetrated by radical groups like al Qaeda. And then, as now, the Pope believed that the proper response was to apply international pressure to alleviate a bad situation.

But instead of applying international pressure and utilizing multilateral diplomacy to fight terrorism, the response by the Bush administration was to send 150,000 troops into Iraq to "liberate" the country. Liberate the country from what, exactly? One bad leader named Saddam Hussein? Make no mistake: the invasion of a country that never posed a threat to the United States, never harbored weapons of mass destruction, and never maintained links to groups like al Qaeda is the greatest misstep to occur during George W. Bush's Presidency.

One of the saddest parts about the war in Iraq is the drastic toll it has taken on the people of the United States. This war has cost the lives of more than 1,500 American soldiers. It has caused nearly 12,000 to be gravely wounded. The war has also killed tens of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians.

And the financial cost of the war has been no less burdensome. When the Senate approves the latest \$81.4 billion supplemental spending bill, Congress will have appropriated over \$200 billion for the war in Iraq in just over 2 years. With no end in sight, President Bush has even claimed that the thousands of troops will remain in the country for years to come, the total cost of the war could be as much as \$800 billion by the time we finish blundering in the Middle East. How many will be dead or wounded by the time this war is done?

Despite the President's solemn promise to fight terrorism, the Bush administration has overwhelmingly concentrated America's resources on developing bigger and more expensive weapons at the expense of other more suitable security tools which will truly keep Americans safe. If our country has any hope of defeating terrorist groups like al Qaeda, we need to utilize the most important weapons in our arsenal, not bigger and more dangerous guns and bombs, but international diplomacy, nonmilitary security, and nonproliferation efforts.

That is why I have developed a SMART Security Resolution for the 21st Century. SMART security is a sensible, multilateral American response to terrorism, and it is just what we need to secure America for the future. SMART security emphasizes the nonmilitary approach over the military approach, considering war as an option only when all other alternatives have been totally exhausted.

If we went to war every time we had a problem with another country's leader, there would be nothing left of the United States. Imagine if we had bombed the Soviet Union in the 1970s during the Cold War. It would have been the start of World War III.

It is time we left Iraq. This needs to be done sooner, not later; and it is time we started relying on the smarter approach. This is the only way to resolve the complex while, at the same time, keeping our men and women in the military safe. Let us support a smarter approach to the 21st century, an approach that I call SMART security.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, today I proudly rise to celebrate Greek Independence Day and its strong ties that bind the nation of Greece and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, 184 years ago, the people of Greece began a journey that would mark a symbolic rebirth of democracy in the land where those principles to human dignity were first espoused.

They rebelled against more than 400 years of Turkish oppression. The revolution of 1821 brought independence to Greece and emboldened those who still

sought freedom across the world. I commemorate Greek Independence Day each year for the same reasons we celebrate our 4th of July. It proved that a united people, through sheer will and perseverance, can prevail against tyranny. Both our nations share an illustrious history and defense of this cherished ideal.

The concept of democracy was first conceived by the ancient Athenians more than 2,500 years ago. Men such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, and Euripides developed the then-unique notion that men could, if left to their own devices, lead themselves rather than be subject to the will of a sovereign.

It was Thomas Jefferson who said, "One man with courage is a majority." Jefferson and the rest of the Founding Fathers looked back to the teachings of ancient Greek philosophers for inspiration as they sought to craft the Declaration of Independence. On March 25, 1821, Archbishop Germanos of Patras embodied the spirit of those words when he raised the flag of freedom and was the first to declare Greece free.

News of the Greek revolution was met with widespread feelings of compassion in the United States. Several American Presidents, including James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, conveyed their support for the revolution through their annual messages to Congress.

Various Members of Congress also showed a keen interest in the Greeks' struggle for autonomy. Henry Clay, who in 1825 became Secretary of State, was a champion of Greece's fight for independence.

After 7 years of fighting, the Greeks finally got their independence. Unfortunately, many people were killed in the struggle for freedom. We all know that the price of liberty can be very high. History is replete with the names of the millions who have sacrificed for it.

This year's celebration of Greek Independence Day is especially fitting in light of the current wave of political and social movements around the world in the name of democracy. International events in recent months have brought stunning news of political upheaval and dramatic changes from the Middle East, Africa, and Eastern Europe. Most notably, through peaceful demonstrations, Syria lost its political stronghold on Lebanon. Ukraine elected Viktor Yushchenko as its new President, and Iraq held its first democratic elections. The common theme among all of these movements has been democracy.

However, at a time of democratic celebration, the divided Republic of Cyprus remains a sore spot. Sadly, Turkey still illegally occupies Cyprus, as it has since its invasion in 1974. Despite sincere efforts by the United Nations and the United States, a fair plan was

not presented to the people of Cyprus on April 24, 2004. Many people, including the Greek-Cypriots themselves, regret that the plan presented to them did not allow both communities to respond positively. It is one thing for others to comment on the terms and conditions for settlement; but it is the Cypriots, the Cypriots who must live with whatever plan that would be adopted. Finding a fair resolution for Cyprus will help stabilize a region marked more often by conflict than accord. I urge our government to remain committed to finding a peaceful settlement for Cyprus.

Although the ties between Greece and America go back hundreds of years, the fruit of this bond is visible today. During the early 1900s, one out of four Greek males immigrated to the United States. Today there are close to 3 million Greek Americans. I am especially proud of my fellow Greek Americans who have made contributions to our society in the fields of medicine, science, business, law, and politics, among other areas. In the words of a notable British poet, Percy Shelley, he said, "We are all Greeks! Our laws, our literature, our religion, our art have their roots in Greece."

Mr. Speaker, on this 184th birthday of Greek independence, we celebrate the triumph of the human spirit and the strength of man's will. Today we commemorate the reaffirmation of the democratic heritage that our two nations share so closely. Lastly, this occasion also serves to remind us, Mr. Speaker, that we must never take for granted the right to determine our own fate.

Mr. Speaker, today I proudly rise to celebrate Greek Independence Day and the strong ties that bind the nation of Greece and the United States.

One hundred and eighty-four years ago, the people of Greece began a journey that would mark the symbolic rebirth of democracy in the land where those principles to human dignity were first espoused.

They rebelled against more than 400 years of Turkish oppression. The revolution of 1821 brought independence to Greece and emboldened those who still sought freedom across the world. I commemorate Greek Independence Day each year for the same reasons we celebrate our Fourth of July. It provided that a united people, through sheer will and perseverance, can prevail against tyranny. Both our nations share an illustrious history in defense of this cherished ideal.

The concept of democracy was first conceived by the ancient Athenians more than 2,500 years ago. Men such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, and Euripides developed the then-unique notion that men could, if left to their own devices, lead themselves rather than be subject to the will of a sovereign. It was Aristotle who said: "If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost." It was this concept that our Founding

Fathers drew heavily upon in forming our representative government.

It was Thomas Jefferson who said that, "One man with courage is a majority." Jefferson, and the rest of the Founding Fathers, looked back to the teachings of ancient Greek philosophers for inspiration as they sought to craft the Declaration of Independence. On March 25, 1821, Archbishop Germanos of Patras embodied the spirit of those words when he raised the flag of freedom and was the first to declare Greece free.

Revolutions embody a sense of heroism, bringing forth the greatness of the human spirit. Encouraged by the American Revolution, the Greeks began their rebellion after four centuries of Turkish oppression, facing what appeared to be insurmountable odds. Both nations faced the prospect of having to defeat an empire to obtain liberty. Although many lives were sacrificed at the altar of freedom, the Greek people rallied around the battle cry "Eleftheria i Thanatos" "liberty or death," mirroring the words of American Patriot Patrick Henry who said: "Give me liberty or give me death." These words personified the Greek patriots' unmitigated desire to be free.

Not surprisingly, the Greek Commander-in-Chief Petros Mavromichalis appealed to the citizens of America, "Having formed the resolution to live or die, we are drawn toward you by a just sympathy since it is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode. . . . Hence, honoring her name, we invoke yours at the same time, trusting that in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you."

News of the Greek revolution was met with widespread feelings of compassion in the United States. Several American Presidents, including James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, conveyed their support for the revolution through their annual messages to Congress. William Harrison, our ninth president, expressed his belief in freedom for Greece, saying: "We must send our free will offering. 'The Star-spangled Banner' must wave in the Aegean . . . a messenger of fraternity and friendship to Greece."

Various Members of Congress also showed a keen interest in the Greeks' struggle for autonomy. Henry Clay, who in 1825 became Secretary of State, was a champion of Greece's fight for independence. Among the most vocal was Daniel Webster from Massachusetts, who frequently roused the sympathetic interest of his colleagues and other Americans in the Greek revolution.

Many Americans sympathized with the "Philhellenic" cause and sent the Greeks supplies, food, and medicine; anything that could help maintain and boost the moral of the Greeks. In fact, many traveled to Greece to join the revolution in the fight for freedom.

After seven years of fighting, the Greeks finally got their independence. Unfortunately, many people were killed in the struggle for freedom. We all know that the price of liberty can be very high—history is replete with the names of the millions who have sacrificed for it. Many great scholars throughout history warned that we maintain democracy only at a great cost. The freedom we enjoy today is due to a large degree to the sacrifices made by men and women in the past—in Greece, in America, and all over the world.

Freedom is America's heart. It is central to our being, and from the beginning we have recognized that freedom is not just an American right. It is a God-given right to every citizen of the world. The lessons the Greeks and our colonial forefathers taught us provide hope and inspiration to victims of persecution throughout the world today.

This year's celebration of Greek Independence Day is especially fitting in light of the current wave of political and social movements around the world in the name of democracy. International events in recent months have brought stunning news of political upheaval and dramatic changes from the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe. Most notably, through peaceful demonstrations, Syria lost its political stronghold on Lebanon, Ukraine elected Viktor Yushchenko as its new president and Iraq held its first democratic elections. The common theme between all of these movements has been democracy.

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I believe these principles of which my colleagues and I have spoken about today are not uniquely Greek or American. They are our promise to the world and they form a legacy that we all cherish and have responsibility to protect and defend.

The priceless ideas of democracy and equality born in ancient Greece have strongly shaped the American national identity. We continue to give hope and inspiration to millions around the world who yearn to live in a free society like ours. We enjoy our freedom only because we have been willing to fight and die for it, just like our forefathers and the valiant Greeks in 1821. Greece set the example for us and we have set the example for countless others.

Although the ties between Greece and America go back hundreds of years, the fruit of this bond is visible today. During the early 1900s one out of four Greek males immigrated to the United States. Today there are close to three million Greek-Americans. I am especially proud of my fellow Greek-Americans who have made contributions to our society in the fields of medicine, science, business, law and politics, among other areas. In the words of a notable British poet, Percy Shelley, "We are all Greeks! Our laws, our literature, our religion, our art, have their roots in Greece."

Mr. Speaker, on this 184th birthday of Greek Independence we celebrate the triumph of the human spirit and the strength of man's will. Today we commemorate the reaffirmation

of the democratic heritage that our two nations share so closely. Lastly, this occasion also serves to remind us that we must never take for granted the right to determine our own fate.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to pay tribute on Greek Independence Day to one of the United States' most important allies and one which is regarded with such deep affection by millions of Americans of all ethnic origins.

Western civilization as we know it today owes the deepest debt and, indeed, its very origins, to the Greek nation. Greek philosophy, sculpture, and theater set standards to which today's practitioners still aspire. And, as the cradle of democracy, Athens is the spiritual ancestor of our own Republic and, in many respects, its role model.

Mr. Speaker, the history of Greek independence is one of the inspiring stories of our time. It is the tale of the revival of an ancient and great people through sheer commitment, sacrifice, and love of freedom and heritage. Transmitted through the generations, the ideals of the ancient Greeks inspired their revolutionary descendants in the nineteenth century, and great and gallant stalwarts of the War of Independence such as Theodore Kolokotronis and Rigas Velestinlis wrote of their belief in the rights of man.

The histories of the United States and Greece have been intimately intertwined ever since the beginning of modern Greek sovereignty. The cause of Greek independence evoked sympathy throughout the Western world. Well known is Lord Byron, whose uncompromising commitment to Greece was epitomized by his declaration "In for a penny, in for a pound." Less renowned but no less committed were the many American Philhellenes, who repaid their debt to Greek culture by crossing the ocean to fight for Greek liberation. I am pleased that these American citizens have been honored with a monument in Athens.

Mr. Speaker, Greek citizens also crossed the ocean in the other direction, emigrating to the United States, where they enjoyed great success and shared their prosperity with their kinfolk in their original homeland. They have served as a bridge of understanding between our two nations, and they have refreshed America with their spirit, their patriotism, and their hard work. Today, some five million Americans claim Greek ancestry, with understandable pride.

Our close relations with Greece became even closer after World War II. The Truman Doctrine helped save Greece from communism, indeed helped save it for the Western and democratic world, and the Marshall Plan helped in Greece's economic regeneration. In 1952, Greece joined NATO, formalizing the deep, mutual commitment of Greece and the rest of the Western world to protecting freedom.

In more recent times, Mr. Speaker, Greece has been one of the world's amazing success stories. A full-fledged member of the European Union for nearly a quarter-century, Greece has become increasingly prosperous; it whipped chronic inflation and joined the "Euro currency zone." Its once unsettled domestic politics—including the sad chapter of military rule from

1967–74—has long since given way to an incontestably stable, yet still colorful, democracy. The Greek people cherish democracy not only as their contribution to world civilization but as a system which they achieved only through enormous sacrifice and commitment in modern times.

Greece remains one of our critical strategic partners in today's post-cold war world. We cooperate closely in promoting peace and stability in the Balkans. Economic ties with Greece are vital to virtually every Balkan state. Athens has been a firm supporter of a just, lasting, and democratic settlement of the Cyprus issue. More than 1,300 Greek troops took part in Operation Enduring Freedom and helped liberate Afghanistan from Taliban tyranny. And I'm sure everybody in this body applauds Greece's historic and courageous effort to resolve differences with its neighbor Turkey, punctuated by its strong backing last year for Turkey's successful bid to open accession talks for EU membership.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Greek people on the 184th anniversary of their independence and in thanking them for their substantial contributions to world civilization and especially to our nation.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise here today to honor a great American ally and an inspiration to people striving for freedom throughout the whole world—Greece.

Today the House observes the 184th anniversary of Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire. This anniversary not only represents a triumph for the nation of Greece but a triumph for all Western democratic nations. The ancient city-states of Greece created many of the fundamental elements that have shaped our modern culture such as logic, mathematics, the empirical method of scientific discovery, politics, and the philosophical ideals that were embraced by our Founding Fathers, especially the motion of democracy and self-governance.

In a perplexing world where terrorism and war confront our nation, it is comforting to know that we can count on the nation of Greece for support. Greece remains one of our staunchest allies. Greece was one of the first nations to express solidarity for the United States after 9/11 and since then has been in the forefront of the War on Terror.

I join Greek Americans in my district of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania and throughout the world in celebrating a proud nation with a rich long heritage in inspiring and influencing men and women around the world. I am proud to stand here today to recognize and honor Greece on this the 184th Anniversary of its independence.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join millions of Greeks and Greek-Americans in celebration of the 184th anniversary of Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire.

Through it was 184 years ago this day that the Greek people fought for their unquestioned freedom, the Greek tradition of liberty and self-governance extends back thousands of years. The city-states of that storied peninsula were truly the forefathers of our democratic lineage. Our own founders drew upon the teachings and experiences of the ancient Greeks in their pursuit of individual freedom.

There is no area of human thought that does not pay homage to the enduring contributions of Greece. Our greatest masters of mathematics, literature, science, art, architecture, theatre and philosophy all trace their intellectual heritage through its people. It is without question that the ancient Greeks were responsible for bringing light on what was an otherwise dark world.

In two centuries, we have watched as a new democracy has been reformed where the very idea of democracy was born. The Greek people have also helped build America as well. Greek-American communities continue to add to the richness and tradition of many of America's cities, not least of all, in my own district in New York City. Our shared values of freedom and individual excellence have made Greek-Americans an important part of the quilt of American society.

Mr. Speaker, on this occasion in which we celebrate Greeks independence, let us all remember the great debt we owe to the civilization that has given so much of itself to become the foundation of all democracies. By carrying on the great tradition of democracy, let us remember and honor the legacy of ancient Greece, as we stand with our Greek friends and allies of today.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Greeks Independence Day.

March 25, 2005 marked the 184th anniversary of the revolution that freed the people of Greece from the Ottoman Empire. Today, I extend my solidarity in commemoration of this celebration of independence and democracy.

As the cradle of western civilization, we are deeply indebted to the nation of Greece and the Greek people for their wisdom and commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy. Our own democracy was created from the blue prints of ancient Greece.

The contribution of Greeks to the arts, sciences, and political fields are felt profoundly to this day. It is through Greek experiences and insight that the ideals of self-governance were shaped. In modern times, the Greek people have reaffirmed their commitment to the goals of their proud past. As a member of the European Union, Greece has constantly championed democratic principles and been an important advocate for freedom fighters throughout the world.

I congratulate the people of Greece for their vital contributions to our world, in both ancient and modern times, as we celebrate Greek Independence Day.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, March 25, 2005 has been designated "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy." I am pleased to join my colleagues in recognizing the unique contribution of Greece and of Greek-Americans.

Ancient Greeks created a form of government that got people involved in the task of governing themselves. Our founding fathers, as ratified in our Constitution, enshrined this principle in American law and created a system of "Grecian republics" which was based on the Hellenic belief that the authority to govern derives directly from the people. We will always owe a great intellectual debt to that rich and vibrant civilization. Today, our two

countries share a great cultural affinity, are partners in the NATO alliance, and have many other ties that bind us together.

In Dallas, Texas, the warm winds of the Greek Isles are just a step away in Yiayia Sofia's Greek Village, the permanent exhibit at the Dallas Children's Museum which offers children the rare opportunity to explore a replica of a home and village square in Greece. Mr. Speaker, more than a million citizens of Greek descent live in America today, and their devotion to family, faith, community, and country has enriched me, my community in Dallas, Texas, as well as our Nation. For that I am always appreciative of the Greek beauty and culture that has enriched my entire life. I'm pleased we take time out each year to recall how we are all enriched by the art, the ideals, and the spirit of Greece.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of the 184th Anniversary of Greek Independence and to thank my colleagues, Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mrs. MALONEY, who have once again shown great leadership in their efforts to organize this special order.

On Greek Independence Day, we celebrate our special ties of friendship, history, and shared values with Greece. In doing so, we not only honor such an important day in Greek history, but also the strong and unique relationship that exists today between the United States and Greece.

Our two nations have enjoyed close relations since the people of Greece declared their independence on March 25, 1821. Our country has welcomed generations of Greek immigrants, and we are grateful for how they have enhanced our culture and contributed to our country in a variety of fields, including philosophy, architecture, politics and the arts. I am so proud to have a thriving community of Hellenic-Americans in the 9th District of New Jersey. I salute them and their ancestors' struggle for freedom on the anniversary of Greek Independence Day and I commend them for their tremendous contributions to the very fabric of our community.

For nearly 200 years, the American and Greek peoples have shared a profound commitment to democratic principles, and have worked to create societies built on these principles. The United States and Greece have stood together in every major struggle for freedom and democracy and now they continue to work together in the fight against terrorism. Greece continues to be a valuable military partner to the United States, as is evident through their support of both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and an important member of both NATO and the European Union.

I am so pleased to have this opportunity to toast the Greek people and celebrate Greek culture once again. It is an honor to rise and commemorate the 184th Greek Independence Day. On this day we celebrate more than just Greece's independence, we celebrate Greece as an important military ally and longstanding friend of the United States.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of the 184th anniversary of Greek Independence. On this special day for Greece, we commemorate the strength and determination of its people to restore their democratic roots and identity.

The political philosophies of both the United States and Greece have been challenged by oppressive powers, and both nations have proudly defended their right to self-government and individual freedoms. Greece endured eleven long years of war to succeed in gaining independence from the Ottoman Empire. American and Hellenic cultures greatly respect this tradition of independence and recognize the importance of democratic principles.

The United States and Greece have always enjoyed a friendship and alliance in international and cultural endeavors. Hellenic principles resonate in our culture and politics, since the United States was founded on the principles of democracy developed thousands of years ago in the city-states of ancient Greece. The beauty of Greek architecture can even be found while taking a walk through our beloved Capitol building. Likewise, our country's influence on Greece can be seen in their first Constitution, which was based on our Declaration of Independence and the principles behind the American Revolution.

On a cultural level, I would like to commend Greece on the great success of the Olympic Games in Athens last August. Since Greece resurrected the Olympics in 1896, they have symbolized peace and excellence for people around the world. The Olympics show that great athletic skill and spirited competition can bring nations together despite their differences. Greece served as a gracious host of the Games, and the 25th Summer Olympics proved again to the world how Hellenic ideals such as equality and friendship have stood the test of time and continue to flourish at a global level. Hellenic culture, whether through its development of democratic government or its espousal of friendly competition, encourages people to come together amicably even during the most difficult of times.

Mr. Speaker, it would be hard to imagine the United States of America, or the world for that matter, without the great contributions of Greece. I will continue to work in Congress to support Hellenic causes, and I would like to join my colleagues in congratulating Greece on the anniversary of its independence.

I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating this anniversary.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues here in the United States Congress in celebration of the 184th anniversary of Greece's Independence Day. We would not be standing in this very building were it not for the influences of ancient Greek architecture and ancient Greek notions of freedom, democracy, and independence.

On the anniversary of Greek independence, we honor the achievements and contributions of the Greek people and the Greek state, and salute a proud nation that has accomplished so much in history, science, philosophy, mathematics, literature, and art. But by far the most notable of all their achievements is the notion of democracy. Our own founding fathers incorporated the ancient Greek's political experience and philosophy when they formed our representative democracy. In 1821, the Greeks continued this tradition by revolting against nearly 400 years of repressive rule by the Ottoman Empire and began their journey toward independence.

Greek concepts of government and freedom have had an immense and inestimable influence on the world. The world witnessed this as Greece, home of the first Olympics, hosted the Games once again in 2004. So March 25th marked a historic day for the world, not just for Greece alone. It is yet another day for all to celebrate the principles of democracy, freedom and self-governance.

Over the years, the United States and Greece have shown their commitment to and admiration for democratic ideals. Greece is one of only a handful of countries that stood by the United States in every major international conflict in the 20th century: World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Desert Storm, and the Balkans. The Greek government responded to the September 11th terrorist attacks with strong political support, as well. The United States and Greece have formed a special bond based upon their shared commitment to democracy and freedom.

Today, the world needs to come together and stand on the basis of Greek principles to protect the human and religious rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. While this is an issue that concerns the Greek community, it is one that is vital to all communities. We must protect the rights of Ecumenical Patriarchate as Turkey has: refused to recognize the Ecumenical Patriarchate's international status and its significance of Orthodox Christians around the world; prevented the Orthodox Christian church from selecting bishops from anywhere in the world to become the Ecumenical Patriarch by requiring Turkish citizenship; confiscated Ecumenical properties since 2002; and levied a retroactive tax on the Balukli Hospital, a philanthropic institution run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate which treats thousands of patients a year.

We also call on Turkey to grant appropriate international recognition and ecclesiastic succession to the Ecumenical Patriarch, along with the right to train clergy of all nationalities.

Finally, the resolution calls on Turkey to respect the property rights and religious rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

From the history of democracy to the religious freedom and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, we share a common vision with Greece and all of her people. On this day, the United States of America and Greece stand side-by-side in our commitment to the principles of democracy, freedom, and independence. And I would like to thank the Greek people for leading the way and giving us the inspiration and strength to pursue these ideals.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on March 25th Greece celebrated its 184th year of independence. I am here tonight to praise a society that represents, in a historical sense, the origins of what we call Western culture, and, in a contemporary sense, one of the staunchest defenders of Western society and values. There are many of us in Congress, on both sides of the spectrum, who are staunchly committed to preserving and strengthening the ties between Greek and American people.

In the years since Greek independence, Americans and Greeks have grown ever closer, bound by ties of strategic and military alliance, common values of democracy, individual

freedom, human rights, and close personal friendship.

The timeless values of Greek culture have endured for centuries, indeed for millennia. Four hundred years of control by the Ottoman Empire could not overcome the Greek people's determination to be free. But, I regret to say, Mr. Speaker, to this day, the Greek people must battle against oppression. For over 30 years now, Greece has stood firm in its determination to bring freedom and independence to the illegally occupied nation of Cyprus.

I also have grown increasingly concerned over the Bush administration's blatant shift in policy towards Cyprus that's become apparent since the Greek Cypriots rejected a United Nations reunification proposal offered by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan last year. I reject the belief that the United States Government should punish Greek Cypriots for going to the voting booth and concluding, rightly in my opinion, that the Annan Plan forced the Greek Cypriots to make far more concessions than Turkey.

I'm particularly concerned by comments made earlier this year by Secretary Rice in Turkey in which she stated: (and I quote) "We are looking at what we can do to ease the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots because, we, like everyone else, were disappointed that the Annan plan was not adopted. We have taken some steps, direct aid for instance to Turkish Cypriots, but there are probably other things that we should look at doing."

I shouldn't have to remind the Secretary of State that the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots derives from the ongoing occupation of the northern third of the island by Turkish troops and that our nations efforts should be concentrated on the withdrawal of these troops.

While the U.S. government should work to make the lives of Turkish-Cypriots better, it's simply unacceptable for our government to help the Turkish-Cypriot 'government' that continues to illegally rule the northern third of the island. The Bush administration simply cannot ignore well-established international law as a way to punish the Greek Cypriots for their democratic vote in opposition to the Annan Plan.

It's important that Secretary of State take a historic look at the Cyprus problem over the last 30 years when developing U.S. policy. It's important the U.S. Government not only look at the Cyprus problem through the lens of the Annan vote last year, but also from the perspective of three decades of illegal actions on the Turkish side.

I would hope that the Bush administration would then conclude that it's in the best interests of our nation to support a united democratic Cyprus, free of any Turkish occupation or any Turkish troops.

Mr. Speaker, I want to once again congratulate the Greek people for 184 years of independence, and hope someday soon we can celebrate the independence of the Greek-Cypriots.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 184th anniversary of Greece's declaration of independence from the Ottoman Empire. Against impossible odds, the Greeks defeated one of the most powerful empires in history and gained their independence.

In March 1821, after 400 years of Ottoman rule, Bishop Germanos of Patras raised the

traditional Greek flag at the monastery of Agia Lavras, inciting his countrymen to rise against the Ottoman army. The Bishop timed this act of revolution to coincide with the Greek Orthodox holiday celebrating the archangel Gabriel's announcement that the Virgin Mary was pregnant with the divine child. Bishop Germanos's message to his people was clear: a new spirit was about to be born in Greece.

Greek Independence Day is an appropriate time to reflect upon the strong ties between Greece and the United States. Indeed, when the Greeks of 1821 fought for independence from the Ottoman Empire, they drew inspiration from the ideals and institutions of the fledgling United States. During their War of Independence, the Greeks also received encouragement from many Americans, including Presidents James Madison and James Monroe and Representatives Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, each of whom gave memorable speeches in Congress in support of the Greek revolutionaries. Just as our defeat of the British army was remarkable, so too was the Greek triumph over the Ottoman Army, a momentous achievement in world history.

As many of my colleagues know, New York City is home to the largest Hellenic population outside of Greece and Cyprus. Western Queens, which I have the honor of representing, is often called Little Athens because of the large Hellenic population in that neighborhood.

New Yorkers celebrate Greek Independence Day with a parade on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, along with a great many cultural events and private gatherings. These events, hosted by the Federation of Hellenic Societies and other Hellenic and Philhellenic organizations and friends, remind us of the Hellenic-American community's many contributions to our nation's history and culture.

On April 10, the President of the Federation of Hellenic Societies, Nikos Diamontidis, along with the organization's officers and board members, will join Parade Committee Chairman Dinos Rallis, Co-Chairmen Tasos Manesis and Philip Christopher and Co-Chairwoman Georgia Kaloidis in reminding New Yorkers of the glory of Greece, the joy of the Olympics and the hope of freedom and human rights for all. The Grand Marshals of this year's parade are my distinguished colleague, Senator PAUL SARBANES, his wife, Christine, Anthony Diamataris, the Editor and Publisher of the National Herald and his wife, Litsa. Adding to the day's ethnic pride will be parade emcees Nick Gregory, Anthoula Katsimatides and Petros Fourniotis.

In 2004, the Athens Olympics united the world. Today, while New Yorkers pay tribute to Greece's accomplishments, we also seek to add our hometown to the list of great Olympic host cities. It is my hope that one of Greece's most enduring contributions to world history will finally come to New York City in 2012.

As the founder and co-Chairperson of the Hellenic Caucus in Congress, I ask the nation to join me in celebrating Greece's independence. Additionally, it is my sincere pleasure to pay tribute to New York's Hellenic-American community for its many contributions to our city and nation.

"Zeto E Eleftheria!" (Long Live Freedom!)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Greek people and their successful

struggle for independence from Ottoman occupation that began nearly 184 years ago.

The Greek intellectual exploration into the meaning of civics and citizenship sparked questions about government that are still being asked throughout the world. Greek curiosity nurtured great thinkers such as Plato and Socrates who spent their lives examining the role between the individual and the state. They posed questions like "what is the meaning of justice?" and "what is the ideal republic?" These timeless questions are still being asked in nations that are searching for a more just government and are being tested in democracies around the world.

When establishing our democratic nation, our founding fathers drew a great deal from the ancient Greeks. Our Democratic system, that is founded on the principals of popular representation, was introduced by the ancient Athenians who were the first to create a civilization based on the rule of the people. Our founding fathers continued the Greek tradition of debating how best to govern and pursued a government that would provide liberty and justice for all. Our dual experiments in democratic government will forever link the United States and Greece.

While our founding fathers relied heavily on the teachings of ancient Greeks, the Greeks based their independence movement beginning in 1821 on our fight for freedom from the British. The Greeks used our struggle for independence as inspiration during their fight from Ottoman rule. Through perseverance and determination the Greeks were able to break from tyranny and bring democracy back to its origins.

Not only can we trace our democratic government to Greece, but also the foundation of science. As some of the first philosophers, the Greeks explored the fields of mathematics, logic, astronomy, physics and biology. The Greeks focused on thinking and understanding, rather than the practical use of their findings in science. Through Aristotle's concept of a posteriori we base the foundations for the modern scientific method. The Greeks taught us that only through experimentation can one truly understand the surrounding world. Our basic understanding of the Earth came from the studies of Ancient Greeks as they questioned the sun, the moons and the stars.

Without the early studies of the Greeks, our current world would be much different. On this 184th anniversary of Greek independence and as a member of the Hellenic Caucus, I rise to honor the Greeks on their everlasting input in our society.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 184th anniversary of Greek Independence Day.

On March 25, 1821, the people of Greece launched a long, but successful revolt against 400 years of oppressive rule by the Ottoman Turks. Greece's eight year struggle for independence is a testament to the strength of the human spirit in its pursuit of freedom.

As Americans, we share with the Greeks their longstanding commitment to democracy and the rule of law. Our Nation's founding principles of freedom and democracy were influenced by ancient Greek philosophers just as the Greek revolution of 1821 was inspired by the American fight for freedom in 1776.

Our common struggles against totalitarianism and fascism have forged a bond between our nations. Greece has stood by the United States throughout modern history's major world conflicts, including World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, and now, the war on terror.

Last summer, the Olympic Games returned to their ancient birthplace. Greece accommodated more than 10,000 athletes from 202 countries. Greece proudly displayed its culture and civilization, and hosted people of all nationalities to participate in noble athletic competition.

I am proud to represent a large and active Greek-American community in my congressional district. I have worked with my constituents to support the return of the Elgin marbles, U.S. participation in negotiations over Cyprus, the inclusion of Greece in the Visa Waiver Pilot Program, and the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew.

I congratulate the people of Greece on their Nation's 184th anniversary of independence and freedom.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today and join the millions of my fellow Americans in commemorating Greek Independence Day which, on March 25th celebrated the 184th anniversary of the rebellion and the struggle of the Greek people against the Ottoman Empire.

What makes Greek Independence Day so special here in America is that it reminds us of the strong principles and bonds that the U.S. and Greece share. In looking into the struggles of our two nations, we realize how much our struggles have in common, and how much each country has been influenced by the other.

Greece and the United States are bound by an absolute commitment to the democratic ideals of justice and freedom and continue to be strong allies. By commemorating Greek Independence Day, we also celebrate the strength and the resolve of the human spirit that has been the inspiration of us all.

I am very pleased to place into the RECORD a statement made on this 184th anniversary of Greek independence written by one of my constituents, Constantinos Nicolaou:

STATEMENT OF MR. CONSTANTINOS NICOLAOU
OF MARYLAND

The greatness of the human spirit, regardless of any efforts to suppress it, will always rise against tyranny and oppression and will start revolutions where heroism will pay any price, even the ultimate sacrifice of life, in order to gain freedom and independence.

Every time we commemorate heroism such as the one exhibited by the Greeks on March 25, 1821 and during the ensuing struggle for their freedom, we cannot help but think of our great Founding Fathers, who were so much influenced by the ancient Greeks in their struggles for freedom and the creation of what had become the freest, most democratic country in history, the United States of America.

Thomas Jefferson looked to the ancient Greek philosophers and their teachings as an inspiration in trying to create a fair, strong, democratic state. And it was not accidental that many of the Greek leaders of the 1821 revolution, turned to America for inspiration as they were embarking in their struggle for freedom.

Both nations were faced with seemingly insurmountable struggles, rising against empires to claim their rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Both nations became triumphant at the end, because of their love of freedom. The great American Patriot, Patrick Henry, proclaimed, "Give me liberty or give me death." The Greek patriots went to battle proclaiming, "Eleftheria I Thanatos"—liberty or death.

As with the American Revolution, the Greek revolution is filled with stories of heroism and sacrifice. News of such heroism and sacrifice met with strong feelings of support by the American public and by their politicians, including President James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, who expressed their support for the Greek revolution through their annual messages to Congress. Henry Clay, our secretary of state in 1825, was very vocal in his support of Greece's fight for independence. Daniel Webster, more often than not, influenced his colleagues in looking into the Greek struggle with sympathetic interests.

It is, of course, no surprise that our Founding Fathers and other prominent Americans were supportive of the Greek struggle for independence. As mentioned, they themselves had been inspired by the ancient Greeks. Thomas Jefferson, of all the Founding Fathers, had a particular affinity for Greece, not only because of its classical republican philosophy but also because of his studies of the origins of languages. He expressed that affinity many times, as in a letter to John Brazier on August 24, 1819. In that letter, Thomas Jefferson addresses "Mr. Pickering's Memoir of the Modern Greek," and the Memoirs review by Brazier. He tells Brazier, "I had been much pleased with the memoir, and was much also with your review of it. I have little hope indeed of recovery of the ancient pronunciation of the finest of human languages, but still I rejoice to the attention the subject seems to excite with you, because it is evidence that our country begins to have a taste for something more than merely as much Greek as will pass a candidate for clerical ordination. . . . Among the values of classical learning, I estimate the luxury of learning the Greek and Roman authors in all the beauties of their originals. And why should not this innocent and elegant luxury take its preeminent stand ahead of all those addressed merely to the senses? I think myself more indebted to my father for this than for all other luxuries his cares and affections have placed within my reach."

Jefferson expressed his empathies with Greece revolting against its Ottoman rulers. In an 1823 letter to Adamantios Coray, the Greek patriot and scholar that he had met in Paris years earlier, he stated:

" . . . You have certainly began at the right end towards preparing them [the Greek people] for the great object they are now contending for, by improving their minds and qualifying them for self-government. For this they will owe you lasting honors. Nothing is more likely to forward this object than a study of the fine models of science left by their ancestors; to whom we also are all indebted for the lights which originally led ourselves out of Gothic darkness."

No people sympathize more feelingly than ours with the suffering of your countrymen; none offer more sincere and ardent prayers to heaven for their success. And nothing indeed but the fundamental principle of our government never to entangle us with the broils of Europe could restrain our generous youth from taking some part in this holy cause. Possessing ourselves the combined

blessing of liberty and order, we wish the same to other countries, and to none more than yours, which she first of civilized nations presented examples of what man should be.

The ties that bind America and Greece go, of course, far beyond their parallel and noble struggles for freedom. The philosophical and cultural connections, although little known to the public at large, could not be stronger or better assimilated. Such connections were born almost at the same time with the birth of our nation, if not before. In his excellent study of "Lincoln at Gettysburg," Gary Wills tells us:

"America as a second Athens was an idea whose moment had come in the nineteenth century. . . . In the early 19th century, an era that became known as America's Greek Revival was taking shape. Archaeological discoveries in Greece at the time brought the ancient democracy to mind just as modern Greece began its struggle for freedom from the Turks.

"Edward Everett, President of Harvard, founder of Mount Auburn, congressman, Massachusetts's governor, minister to the Court of St. James's in London, senator, secretary of state and principal speaker at Gettysburg years later, was the leader of the Greek Revival. Harvard established its new chair of ancient Greek studies for him. While studying in Germany, Everett went to Greece, 'to walk over the battlefields where the first democracy of the West won its freedom.' He returned to America convinced that a new Athens was rising here. His appearances, 'prompted rallies for Greek independence'—a favorite cause of Everett.

"Everett's prestige influenced others, including historian George Bancroft, whose 'main interest was Greek history.' . . . Bancroft was ahead of the wave of histories that would glorify Periclean Athens in Victorian England. Direct democracy, a flawed system in republican theory, was rehabilitated, for its usefulness in the parliamentary reform movement, by British historians like George Grote. In America, a similar motion toward government by the people, not just for the republic, was signaled by an enthusiasm for Greek symbols. Bancroft became a Jacksonian Democrat when he began to apply historical skills formed on the Attic democracy to America's development. Walter Savage Landor recognized what was happening in America when he dedicated the second volume of his *Pericles and Aspasia* to President Andrew Jackson."

Greece and the United States, bound by their absolute commitment to freedom and justice, have always been the strongest of the allies. Greece stood by us and fought with us in every single war or conflict since we both gained our freedom. And we always stood by Greece, and although at times we appeared to have forgotten how loyal and valuable the Greeks had been to us, our ultimate commitment to their freedom and well-being never wavered.

And as we commemorate and fight to free all people, let us remember that some other friends of ours are still agonizing and asking for our help in fighting forces of evil still occupying their land and their homes. The people of the Republic of Cyprus, Greeks and Turks and all others, should be given more active support by our great nation in their efforts to reunite the island and get rid of the occupying forces. U.S. leadership is essential, and now it is the time that we should remember that the Cypriot people are where we had been, and they are striving for what we have earned long time ago, that is,

their right to freedom, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is essential that American leadership urges Turkish and Turkish Cypriot leaders towards peace. These are the two sides that hold in their hands, to the largest extent, the peaceful solution to the Cyprus problem. A solution that undoubtedly will benefit all the people of Cyprus, but it will also benefit the nations of Greece and Turkey, will stabilize the region, and will strengthen the bonds and relationships between the United States and the countries involved in the conflict.

As we commemorate Greek Independence Day, we are celebrating the strength and the resolve of the human spirit as well as man's unbending will in the pursuit of freedom. The people of ancient Greece gave us values and ethics and showed us how to fight for freedom and democracy. Our country, more than any other country, shares those values and ethics, and in days such as this we reaffirm our common democratic heritage with the Greek people. The commemoration and celebration remind us also that we should stay forever vigilant in fighting for and protecting our freedom and our democracy, least we lose the right to determine our lives and our future.

Dionisios Solomos was the great poet who transformed in his poetry the unparalleled struggle and the sacrifices of Hellenism in the pursuit of Freedom. The Revolution so much influenced his poetry that he is considered the national poet of Greece. One of his most inspired poems, *Hymn to Liberty*, has almost become synonymous to that Revolution and it became Greece's National Anthem. The poem was published in 1825, along with translations in Italian, French and English.

The Revolution would have never been the same without Solomos. The enthusiasm of the fighters, as well as the international sympathy among the Philhellenes would have definitely been smaller without the *Hymn to Liberty*.

Probably nowhere was Solomos's vision of Liberty depicted better than here, in the United States. Here, in the Rotunda of our own Capitol Hill, we see a most wonderful painting of Liberty, with the sword in hand chasing her enemies, exactly the way Solomos envisioned her in his *Hymn to Liberty*. This figure was painted by another son of Greece, one who really grasped Solomos's vision of Liberty, Constantino Brumidi.

And as a tribute to the United States, Solomos envisions our country rejoicing in seeing Greece fighting for Freedom. He describes the American feelings this way:

Most heartily was gladdened
George Washington's brave land;
For the iron bonds remembered,
Her old slavery's cruel brand.

We live today in a great, free country. Our country became great, and will always be so, because the spirit and the morals that we share with Greece, as so eloquently expressed by Solomos, will always be with us.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

THE MORE WE KNOW ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN, THE LESS WE LIKE IT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, during the Easter recess, our office sponsored a town hall meeting for constituents to voice their opinions on the administration's plan to partially privatize Social Security. It was actually held at a community college, at Houston Community College Northeast, that is in our district; and we had both college students and senior citizens there.

One of the things that came out of that town hall meeting is the concern that Social Security is not broke; that sure, \$1.7 trillion of our national debt is, as the President says, IOUs from Social Security, and my constituents' concern is that if we are going to pay back the 40 percent of our national debt, about \$7 trillion, to the many citizens of foreign countries who loan money to the United States, why on this Earth would we not pay back the Social Security trust fund that \$1.7 trillion.

One thing that came out of that town hall meeting is that the more details they learned about the President's plan, the less they favor it. That might be why the administration has released so few details about their plan. What we know is the plan includes a proposal to allow taxpayers 4 percent or up to \$1,000 in private savings accounts that theoretically would yield a greater return than the government bonds on which Social Security is now invested. That proposal sounds all well and good until the American people, in our district particularly, realized that the private accounts would not alleviate any of Social Security's financial challenges.

The recent Social Security Trustees Report estimated the Social Security shortfall to be \$3.7 trillion over the next 75 years. But the proposal to create these private accounts or personal accounts will not help the bottom line at all. Even the President, before we broke for our Easter recess, admitted that "personal accounts do not solve the issue."

What the President needed to add at the end of that sentence is that the private accounts actually make the problem worse.

In the first 20 years of the President's plan, the Federal Government will have to borrow \$5 trillion to make up for the additional shortfall created by these private or special accounts. And, even worse, if you use the Social Security Administration's assumption, the administration's privatization plan would exhaust the trust fund actually 11 years earlier than currently projected.